
Neuromarketing

Underground Gazette

Issue #3, Volume 1

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Liking Persuasion Principle

Welcome to NUG issue #3! When your readers feel a *real connection*... that you sincerely care, or understand them in certain ways... they are subconsciously drawn to you and inspired to please you (i.e. honor your call to action). Conversely, cultivating strong **rappport** definitely helps shorten the initial trust-building curve.

According to Dr. Cialdini:

“People prefer to say ‘yes’ to those they know and like. One of the things that Marketers can do is honestly report on the extent to which the product or service – or the people who are providing the product or service – are similar to the audience and know the audience’s challenges, preferences and so on.”

Interestingly, America’s Advertising Research Foundation research concluded that ‘likeability’ is the most powerful advertising methodology:

*“But as long ago as 1991, America's Advertising Research Foundation – setting out to validate 35 competing commercial ‘pre-testing’ methodologies and establishing that none could be rejected – concluded that one measure, **likeability**, outperformed all others as a predictive metric. In other words, there was no “silver bullet” available to advertisers and effectiveness was best predicted simply by whether people liked your commercial.”* [\[source\]](#)

In a [2005 study](#), it was determined that up to 80% of an ad’s memorability *is directly related to its likeability*.

In his book *The Advertised Mind*, Erik du Plessis revealed a simple but effective methodology for increasing ad likability called **COMMAP** (short for COMmunication-style MAP). It conveniently boils ad likeability down to six core aspects:

- **Entertainment:** Although not necessarily restricted to the overt use of humor, ads that entertain have a high likeability.
- **Empathy:** People like ads they can relate to, such as ads that show the type of stuff they tend to own, experiences they can identify with and/or lifestyle choices that resonate with them.
- **Relevant News:** More than just ‘new information’, this type of relevant news is new information that is presented in a *meaningful problem-solution style*.
- **Familiarity:** A phenomena commonly referred to as “ad fatigue” (i.e. boring or over-saturated ads) can produce the exact opposite effect of entertainment; whereby potentially lowering likeability.
- **Confusion:** Confusing ads also potentially damage likeability, as they are unable to effectively connect (i.e. little to no empathy, relevant news and/or entertainment value).

- **Alienation:** Although confusing advertising is typically ignored, annoying ads can seriously damage a brand.

Hence a delicate blend of relevant information combined with empathy and entertainment yields the **highest likability results**. Conversely - familiarity, confusion and alienation should be avoided.

In Dr. Cialdini's book **Pre-Suasion: A Revolutionary Way To Influence And Persuade**, he adds a new twist to the Liking Persuasion Principle. His research now indicates that your ability to influence others is directly tied to *how strongly they believe that you like them*.

According to Dr. Cialdini, person A is far more likely to trust person B if person A actually believes that person B likes them. Under this premise, person A tends to sincerely believe that person B will not lead them astray; moreover, that person A will also have person B's best interests at heart.

To put this into perspective... while it's certainly important that your customers like you, it's considerably more important that your customers think that you **genuinely** like them. Let that sink in for a moment. So how do you persuade your customers that you like them?

Actionable Takeaway

When it comes to likability, the old saying "Flattery will get you everywhere" still holds true. So as a Digital Marketer, always be thinking *in terms of gratitude and compliments*. The key is to make them **genuine and sincere**, and not come off sounding like a bubble-gummy assclown.

Ironically, flattery can even be effective **even when the flatterer's motives are questionable**. Scientists Elaine Chan and Jaideep Sengupta reported in the Journal of Marketing Research: "*From the marketer's perspective, the results suggest that [even] insincere flattery can exercise a persuasive influence on consumers' automatic reactions.*"

Moral: Focus on getting customers to like you, by *showing them how much you like them* though a powerful combination of compliments and gratitude.

And that's a perfect place to wrap up issue #3 of the Neuromarketing Underground Gazette. See you in issue #4!

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